DEFEND LABOR'S RIGHTS!

MASS MEETING

THURSDAY
JUNE 8
8:15 P.M. [1944]

HOTEL
DIPLOMAT
(Crystal Ball Room)
108 WEST 43rd STREET
N. Y. C.
(Air-Conditioned)

ADMISSION: 25 Cents

18 UNION & SOCIALIST LEADERS NOW BEHIND PRISON BARS

- 18 LEADERS of the MINNEAPOLIS TEAMSTERS LOCAL 544, CIO and of the SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY went to jail New Year's Eve. These were the
- FIRST CONVICTIONS under the SMITH "GAG" ACT of 1940 which was
- CONSIDERED UNCONSTITUTIONAL and a violation of the Bill of Rights
- CIO and AFL both opposed its passage in Congress.
- SUPREME COURT, in an unprecedented action, three times refused to review the case. This sets a dangerous
- PRECEDENT which can be used against other trade unions and groups. For this reason the
- CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE, in the fight to repeal this law, is conducting a NATIONAL CAMPAIGN for PRESIDENTIAL
- PARDON to FREE THE 18 MINNEAPOLIS PRISONERS.

DEMAND THE PARDON OF THE 18!
REPEAL THE SMITH "GAG" ACT!

HEAR

GEORGE NOVACK

National Secretary, Civil Rights Defense Committee

Account of his three months coast to coast tour covering all principal cities in behalf of the 18 prisoners in the Minneapolis Labor Case.

Messages of solidarity will be delivered by:

THOMAS DE LORENZO
President, UAW-CIO Local 365

SAMUEL WOLCHOK
President, United Retail Wholesale & Dept. Store Empl. of America

DANIEL BELL
Assoc. Editor, The New Leader

ROGER BALDWIN
Director, American Civil Liberties Union

NORMAN THOMAS
Noted Socialist and Author

ALBERT GATES
Editor, Labor Action

Chairman:
GEORGE BALDANZI
Executive Vice-President, Textile Workers Union of America

Auspices:
CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE
160 Fifth Avenue — New York City

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MASS MEETING

To Protest The Imprisonment of Labor's 18

First Victims of the Smith "Gag" Act Convicted in the Minneapolis Labor Case

TO DEFEND LABOR'S RIGHTS AND FREE SPEECH.

MEMBERS OF MINNEAPOLIS TRUCKDRIVERS LOCAL 544 - CIO AND OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

SPEAKER

GEORGE NOVACK

NATIONAL SECRETARY
CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 1944, 8:00 P. M.

BUCKINGHAM HALL

SOCONY VACUUM BLDG. 2nd FLOOR

59 EAST VAN BUREN ST.

All trade unionists and every person interested in the preservation of civil liberties - now threatened by the Smith "Gag" Act should attend.

Auspices: CHICAGO BRANCH, CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE

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ADMISSION 25c

Saturday April 27, Copy of letter from Geo. To Evelyn

Here I am on the Pacific coast and clicking along on twelve cylinders Although# I arrived several days before schedule Seattle put me to work the day of my arrival. On Thursday evening I addressed the meeting of Local 104, Int'l Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders, welders and helpers, one of the largest most progressive and energetic unions in this part of the country. From three to four hundred shipyard workers were present. They had come, not to hear me, but to see patriotic pictures and listen to official Navy propaganda speakers. But as an added feature, or antidote, I received a very cordial welcome.

The Local passed, I understand, some kind of resolution but I'll find out what later. I met all the officials and chatted with them. One the assistant sec.Tres., Nick Hughs is to be on the program with me at the CRDC meeting to morrow night.

This was the biggest group of workers I have spoken to on my tour so far, and quite a few of these shipyard workers are expected to be on hand Sunday at the meeting.

Last night I was the final speaker on the program of the officers inaugural dinner dinner of the Seattle branch of the NAACP. Most of the negro leaders of the city were present and came up to me afterwards to thank me for the talk and to get further information about the case.

Tonight there is to be a social for me and Sunday I have Two engagements one at the Church of the Peaoples Forum in the University section and the CRDC meeting at Roosevelt Hotel in the evening. This is the first public meeting Seattle has attempted in a long time and they are doubtful of the extent of the turnout. But with my preparatory talks I believe we are we are building to-wards a good affair.

At the NAACP, I spoke after a democratic candidate for Gov., Knute Hill, I believe has name is, an ex congressman. Ruth got his assent to write a letter to the Pres. which you should get soon.

At the meeting was a young socialist who wanted me to speak to a group of about 150 CO's in a camp about 50 miles from Portland but I doubt that I can make it. However he promised to try and send you a list of CO camps and contacts to whom to send the latest pamphlet. If you don't receive that list in a few #### weeks, perhaps you could get a list of such work camps from the National Service Comm. for CO's in N.Y. or from Harrison DeSilver, Sec. of the ACLU'S CO Comm.

Because I came in ahead of schedule, it was impossible to get hotel accomadations for me untill I dispuised myself as a seaman and put up untill Sunday at the Seamans Hotel here.

When you go down to visit Grace, be sure to bring all the pamphlets, newspapers magazines etc. to show her. Also be primed to give her all the information that she cannot other wise get. You can talk freely with her, I believe.

To day I took a stroll through the market district of Seattle as we

often walked Sundays through the east side market streets. I was so enticed by the sea-food displays and so occupied with thoughts of you and all my friends in NY that I couldn't resist buying and sending a representative selection of Northwest fish. So by next Friday you should receive via express an ice-packed 8 pound fresh salmon; 5 pounds of kippered salmon which will keep; and a pound of kippered herring for a chaser.

I know you cannot alone consume an eight pound salmon, and I intended it also for the girls in the CRDC and other office. So either have someone prepare a mutual feast and have a glass of sauterne on me, or give them part of the fish.

The kippered salmon is partly a gift to John G. Invite him for a tall drink and a slice of smoked salmon in celebration of my successful tour. Or perhaps you could have Ted, Art, Morris, Bert and all the others over to tear a herring some night after the paper has been put to bed.

I hope you'll be in New York to receive this piscatorial present.

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Before I leave Seattle I'll send you a detailed account of my visit to Kelly Postal. But there's one matter which should be attended to promptly. Kelly complained of the character of the prison library which is mostly composed of popular fiction. He wants some books he can study.

He would like the Treasury of Science published by Harpers which the men at Sandstone are enthusiastic about. Another good book for him, I believe would be The Conquest of Civilization by James Henry Breasted, also published by Harpers. In addition he would like also Trotsky's History or some one of the good books which the Sandstoners recommended.

Send them as soon as you can from the publishers to Kelly Postal, care of the Warden, Stillwater Penitentiary, Stillwater, Minn.

The warden permits Postal to read the CRDC releases at monthly intervals in his office, so that he is thereby kept informed of developments.

Please send me Natalia's address.

I hope the correspondents in the various cities send you more complete reports that you get from me. You will understand that I see and talk to many more people that I write you about. I have time and energy to inform you only of the most significant engagements and events.

San Francisco

May 1, 1944

Dear Daniel Zhitlowsky:

I received this morning your letter of April 28th outlining the tentative schedule for my visit. It looks all o.k. with me so just go ahead and do your best along these lines.

There are several other matters which I mention simply to make sure that they will be taken care of. Have you made hotel reservations for me and if so, where? Have you made train reservations for me from Los Angeles through to New York via St. Louis, Dayton, Ohio and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania? The matter of rail transportation reservations is extremely important and should be attended to immediately, since I understand they are difficult to get.

I intend to leave San Francisco at 8 AM , Sunday, May 7th on the Southern Pacific "San Joaquin". Since trains run not according to schedule but according to the calendar these days, I suggest that you check with the station about the time of my arrival. I would appreciate having someone meet me.

Fraternally,

George Kovacs

From George, Sunday, April 16, 1944.

(The visit to Sandstone, like most everything else on the tour, exceeded expectations.) I drove up from Mpls. with Henry S. on Friday morning through a rainstorm which turned into a light sleet and snowfall as we approached Sandstone 100 miles distant. I've been looking for spring since I left New York!

The penitentiary is about a mile and a half from the town of Sandstone. Our auto had to travel slowly and continuously along a narrow, twisting, rutted sandy-soiled road until we came to a high narrow bridge over the Kettle River - which guards the approach to the prison like a moat around a mediaeval dungeon. It's cut-over land, a ravine here and there, rather wild and inhuman. The first sight of the prison is the water-tower; then, as we rounded a bend, we saw the two-story concrete structure spread out over the plain, with a few sparse trees around; a flagpole bearing three flags; and the warden's and guards' white colonial houses in front. The grounds around have a rough, unfinished appearance. We passed a truck-load of prisoners going to work on the roads after lunch and we peered at them, hoping to glimpse a familiar face - we then expected that I would see only the five.

A guard stopped the car about a hundred yards from the entrance of the main building, and after being reassured about our business, took the keys of our parked car, and then we entered a small square entrance hall about the size of a New York apartment bedroom. I saw a guard in a small cage, and then behind him beyond another set of bars was Skoglund. Seated on a bench, grinning, was also Ed Palmquist. While I stated my business and signed an interminable collection of documents, the guards called out the names of all the 14 - each answered present; stepped forward; and then passed through the cage; into a reception room at the left. We could see each other and exchanged words and smiles of recognition.

Then I realized that I was to see all of the prisoners together and my heart bounded with excitement. That was more than I had hoped for. So, seizing my fortune at the flood, I requested an additional half-hour with Cannon and Skoglund from the warden after my hour with the 14. The request was granted. Tell Rose I wouldn't have dared do so if she hadn't made the suggestion.

(After being searched to see if I was bearing (~~not seditious ideas~~!) ~~but~~ concealed weapons, the guard ushered me into a large meeting room and I seated myself behind a desk in one corner. Before me, disposed in a semi-circle of seats, were all the comrades. Farrell was at my left hand; Al, Felix, etc. toward the center, and Skogie and Jim were at close hand on my right.

They were dressed in blue denim slacks, shirts and coats, and all looked vigorous, healthy and trim. Most had lost weight; that was especially noticeable on Carl, Jim and Felix. They had evidently

all grommed themselves for this gala event - and looked better-kempt - hair cut, etc., than I probably did. It warmed the heart to see the smiling and friendly faces so eager to hear what I had to tell them, as though they were settling down to a holiday feast!

And I was prepared to serve them a different menu than they ordered! Having exchanged salutations, Jim, as the designated spokesman, said to me: "Now tell us everything ~~about the party~~ that we haven't heard about in letters." Here I was, primed to give a defense report, and Jim calmly requested an organizational-political report. Somewhat flabbergasted, I floundered about at first, not sure what to say or how to say it - one eye on the guard who was in the far corner, two eyes on the rest of the comrades, and three eyes on Jim.

But as I began to become more and more outspoken, I didn't notice any expressions of alarm, but only deep satisfaction, so I warmed up to my subject, and told them, somewhat disjointedly, my impressions and observations of the party during my tour. Also what news I had of developments in New York, etc.

When I finished, a number asked questions. Jim wanted to know how we were getting along financially. Farrell how the recruiting drive was going. Also, what our role was in the Michigan Labor Party movement. Felix what we heard from Italy, France and the other countries. Carlos about the Chicago Commonwealth Party adventure. Jim especially inquired about the new cartoonist on the paper.

The biggest laugh of the meeting occurred when I assured them that we had no really serious organizational difficulties, despite their absence; that the N.O. was functioning well; that the Militant was becoming more influential and widely read, and we would very probably surpass the 3,000 new subscribers quota; and that it was a lively six-pager "which some comrades thought even showed a few improvements here and there". They all roared, and Jim remarked that there's nothing like a "little new blood" to start things moving ahead.

They wanted to know about the C.P. developments, and the W.P. and about the personnel in the N.O. and in the CRDC office. What the new CRDC pamphlet was like, etc. I kicked myself for not having brought in a copy to show them - because that is a publication to be proud of - and I apologize for believing that 30,000 was too many. It may be too few. Jim was particularly pleased by the title of the "Why We Are in Prison" speeches.

I read them letters from Grace and Oscar about parole and also the comment of the S.P. C.O. in Danbury about the comrades which I picked up in Detroit. "The S.W.P. had ideas, a tested leadership, and a disciplined cadre - something that the pacifists haven't got."

About parole. By decision of the group, Ed. Palmquist applied for parole and his application was rejected. That was done as a test case for the boys in Sandstone. Jim says that it's O.K. for the boys in Danbury to make application as that action is in line with the policy adopted. But, none of the leaders of the party have made or will make application for parole. That includes Grace. She should not make any request for parole. Please inform her accordingly.

About pardon. The leaders will concentrate upon getting pardon because that is the politically correct action to take; to complete

the record of the case and to exhaust all legal remedies. They have no illusions about the chances - and are prepared to serve their full terms. Jim says that about August the formal application should be made. We can inform them when we think the peak of the national campaign has been reached and then they will forward their formal petition.

I asked what they had to tell their comrades and friends. Here are a few of Jim's remarks as spokesman for the 14. "Everybody is in good health and in excellent spirits (except Jake Cooper, he parenthetically added amidst roars of laughter "who strained his back working too hard.") They are all reading, studying and utilizing the opportunity to make themselves more effective agents of the revolutionary movement when they are freed. They are deeply grateful for the monthly sums given them by the CRDC which enables them to buy tobacco, fruit, soap "those little things which take the rough edges off harsh prison life." They wanted to convey their warmest comradely greetings to their comrades in Danbury and to Grace.

Of the greatest pleasure and profit to them were the books sent by the CRDC which help them to further their individual and collective studies. They had just received the three volumes of Capital, Grote's History of Greece and Hacker's The U.S. since 1865. They spoke of these gifts as tho they were manna from heaven.

All are studying some specialized subjects as well as doing generalized reading, fiction, poetry, etc. Ray Dunne is reading Browning's poetry. Harry DeBoer is deep in the History of the Russian Revolution, of which there are now three sets in the prison library - and all in use!

Jim is studying French and Spanish - and has just finished Aristotle. Skogie who taught astronomy when he was a young man in Sweden has just finished the Treasury of Science. While their bodies have been pent behind cement walls, their minds and imaginations have been roaming through celestial space and penetrating into the depths of the earth. Al G. is also studying French and Spanish - and Marx' Capital. Carlos, German & Spanish. Felix is taking advanced courses in French and Spanish. Farrell is not only acquiring French but is making an intensive study of American history. He has just finished reading Beard's "History of American Civilization", annotating it line by line, checking it against the works of the American historians.

The others claim that because Harry reads slowly, he has become a"bottleneck" in the educational line, holding up instruction!

Jim observed in regard to this educational group: "Since Czarist days and long before, prisones have been the universities of the revolutionary movement. We are doing our best here at Sandstone to continue that tradition. We are not at all the last class-war prisoners who will be jailed for their revolutionary ideas and labor activities. We are trying to pave the way and to set an example for the others who will follow us into capitalist jails in this country. We don't want to lose time in prison. We intend to get something in return for the liberties that have been taken away from us."

Hex asked me to write to Natalia about my visit and to inform her that they are all well and thinking of her. I shall do that.

They are especially interested in getting in letters information about party activities and the whereabouts and activities of all the individual comrades. They get other information from the press.

[The time passed like a minute. The guard interrupted our convivial discussion with a warning that only five minutes more were left. By this time we were talking as though the penitentiary were a meeting hall] and I was giving them a political report. [We had taken up the threads where they had been cut last December, and were knitting them together. And now - they were to be broken! Once again.]

[I told them that I xxx could not give each of them all the separate greetings that I had been entrusted to convey, that that could be done only in Russian style - but that the most hearfelt greetings had been sent by their comrades, friends, wives and children. Then, one by one, they filed out of the room and I watched them go back into the prison, smiling, heads erect and shoulders square - soldiers of the revolution returning to the capitalist barracks for nine more months of forced labor and servitude.]

[Jim and Skogie stayed behind for an extra half hour. I talked with kx Skogie about the deportation proceedings and the labor situation in Mpls. and about a number of matters with Jim. Skogie had just celebrated his 60th birthday in Sandstone., Vincent was to mark his 56th and Jim his 54th. Jim jestingly told Carl that "he was old enough to know better than to get into a place like Sandstone at his age."]

[Jim's last message to the comrades was this: "The comrades must keep clearly in mind the fact that there will inevitably be the most profound and powerful revulsion among the masses against this war when they come to realize that they were deceived, that it brought them nothing but disasters and destruction and depression. He has never forgotten how that revulsion grew after the last war - and the reaction against this war is bound to be far greater and more radical. In the period ahead, as then, everyone in the labor movement and in liberal circles who beat the drums for the war, duped and sold out the workers, would be disgraced and discredited. The masses would not listen to them. They would listen only to those who stood out against the war, told the truth to the workers, and had the courage of their convictions. The only party that they can turn toward then is ours, because we never betrayed them. They will have boundless trust and confidence in our program and leadership. And that is why we can be optimistic about the future."]

[I could say more, but do not have the time now. In my next letter I shall write about my visit to Kelly Postal] Tursday. He, too, is well and in good spirits. I know you all wanted to hear about my visit with the 14, so I hasten to dispatch this to you.

Tomorrow morning I go to Jamestown, N.D. to speak at the Farmers Union. Today I speak at the NAACP in Mpls. I will not stop in Montana, no meeting could be arranged.

Please send me a typed copy of this letter so I can use it for the article I intend to write for the paper. I shallnot, however, write a separate piece on ~~khe~~ K.P. , as he is coming up for parole in the next few weeks, and I do not consider it advisable. But I shall weave it into my Sandstone story. I shall need more leisure than I have yet had to find time for such literary work, but perhaps the pace on the West Coast will not be so fast and furious.

Tell Rose the letter cameetoo late for me to make that inquiry from Jim, but I have made arrangements to take care of the matter in the next week or so.

Write a good story about your visit to Grace, and send a copy to me.

Morris

From George, Chicago, April 8.

I have a great deal of news, and all of it is good - to report from Chicago. The best method will be to review my activities from Monday to today.

I spent Tuesday discussing the Chicago situation with our friends; making appointments to see people; and ventured the criticism that there were far greater possibilities for support than the CRDC workers yet realized. Subsequent developments confirmed the observation.

Wed. A.M. I spent an hour and a half with Willard Townsend, Pres. of United Transport Service Employees of Am.-CIO. Very friendly, he offered whole-hearted of his international.

1. He will submit a resolution of endorsement of the CRDC and support of the 18 at the 4th Biennial Convention of his International, to be held May 17-19 here in Chicago.

2. He wants to have a CRDC speaker present the case at the convention.

3. He will have a batch of petitions given to each convention delegate to be signed by their local members.

4. In addition, he agreed to talk to other members of the CIO International Executive Board about the case. He wanted me in particular to see Wurth Laurie, Pres. of Int. Woodworkers of Am-CIO at Portland, Oregon. He also said that the following Int. Pres. would be sympathetic and should be <u>personally</u> contacted.

Harold Straub, Utility Workers Org. Comm.
1133 Broadway, N.Y.

Mike ~~Zoravich~~ Zonarich, Pres. Aluminum Workers of Am.,
209 Shepard Bldg., New Kensington, Pa.

Milt Murray, Pres. Newspaper Guild of A.,
63 Park Row, R. 905, N.Y.C.

Anthony Esposito, Novelty Workers

Sam Wolchock, Retail, Wholesale, etc.

Martin Wagner, Gas, Coke & Chem. Workers
1718 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.
(Wagner is a friend of the Dunnes & was instrumental in getting the CIO charter from Lewis for 544)

Wednesday afternoon I saw the editor & labor editor of the Midwest edition of the Chicago Daily Forward which has since carried ads for the CRDC meeting & a story on the case as a result.

I saw Frank Zaitz, editor of Prosveta, weekly organ of the Jugoslav Socialist Federation and Anthony Garden, his associate. They promised publicity and support. Put them on the CRDC mailing list. C/o Prosveta, 2657 South Laindale Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

I saw Vincent Cainlsar, President of the Slovene National Benefit Society, 2659 S. Laindale Ave., Chicago. This is a fraternal society of Jugoslavs similar to the Workmen's Circle and I had a letter of introduction to him from several Slovenian friends in Cleveland, and Chicago.

He wants me to write him a letter and will very likely give a contribution and access to his branches throughout the industrial centers. I shall write the letter from Mpls. where I can get a good stenographer, and send a copy to you.

Thurs. A.M. I saw Michael Mann, Sec. of the Chicago CIO industrial Union Council. He was very sympathetic and promised his personal cooperation. He will try to get an official resolution, if possible, passed by the CIO Council, but, because of the C.P. influence there and impending elections, he and his friends may not be able to push it through. However, he assured me that whatever official stand the Council itself took, he would help get contributions from the more progressive locals in Chicago. He said there was no reason why through these locals and internationals, the CRDC couldn't get at least $500 in the next few months, if our friends were persistent in their efforts. He pointed out that, aside from any active hostility, unions and organizers are pestered by so many demands for contributions by such causes as the Red Cross, Community Chests, etc. that unless special efforts were made by our committee to keep after the locals, and the special importance of this was explained to its members, the natural inclination was to table the request. Will also write a personal letter later.

Later I saw a UE-CIO Int. Rep. and memberx of the Chicago CIO Council, who, despite battles he has had with the Trotskyists in the unions, promised to back the resolution if and when it comes up in the Council. I also saw the Pres. of a Laundry Workers CIO Local who will admit a speaker and petition at their next meeting.

Friday I saw Brother Mattson, Regional Director of the UAW-CIO. Altho he has had frequent run-ins with the Mpls. Teamster leaders in the past, he recognized the need to support these labor victims in this case. He agreed to say, if any local unions referred the matter to him, that the UAW Convention in 1941 had given support to these people and it was a worthy cause. He also volunteered to urge R. J. Thomas to openly endorse the defense and thought it ought to be brought up before the UAW Int. Ex. Board meeting to be held in Mpls. on ~~Mxy~~ May 15th. I would first like

to see what Thomas and Reuther do. His friendly attitude xxx will open the door to most of the UAW locals in this area.

I saw the Pres. of a Brewery Workers Local who has contributed several times in the past. The most valuable thing I got from my visit was a complete list of the Brewery Workers Locals which I enclose herewith for your use.

I suggest the following procedure: Ask Sam Pollock to go to Cincinnati, Ohio & see the President at 1307 Walnut St. and get a letter of endorsement from him. Then, use that letter, the leaflet and your own letter stressing the fight with Tobin and the imprisonment for socialist ideas. The Brewers xxx are also at odds with Tobin & many are old-time German socialists. This should be a profitable mailing, if you can get the President's o.k. If not, just go ahead without it.

This same union leader also gave us a list of friendly AFL locals in Chicago to visit and the local committee will do so.

Finally, I saw Francis Gorman, Sec. Treas. of the Butchers, Meatcutters, Packers Int. AFL. He was very sympathetic and asked me to write him a letter requesting a contribution. Altho he didn't make any binding promise, I believe that a generous donation will be forthcoming. I will write this letter also from Mpls. and send you a copy.

From this report you can see that in many directions we can secure support that we might not believe we can get. That I have been very industrious since arrival here.

Friday night was the public CRDC meeting. Francis Heisler was Chairman and I the speaker. About 65 people present, many workers from the plants, new faces. About 200 tickets were sold. Collection about $85 but total proceeds will be about $100. Chicago CRDC will give me $50 for expenses and send you the rest.

Two members of the ACW xx Exec. Board of Chicago were present and permitted me after the meeting to take up the case with their Board and get a resolution and contribution.

Chicago will now get busy visiting all the unions in this territory, now that the ice is broken. Like many local committees, they needed a push and a broader perspective of the possibilities of this area than they had. They trained their sights too low and underestimated the power, the justice and the appeal of our fight. The results of my visit here and elsewhere have shown beyond doubt that we have not yet xxx tapped a hundredth part of the mass labor support we can get - if we get up and go after it. We don't yet realize our latent strength.

I try to tell our co-workers that the Mpls. case is another Tom Mooney case, Debs case, Sacco-Vanzetti frameup. That they must act accordingly. These cases, too, began with only a small group, like ours and then spread into national and international causes celibres through successive efforts and stages of struggle. But we are certainly penetrating into wider and wider circles of the labor movement.

I wrote J. Boulds, calling off the Plentywood meeting and agreeing to meet him at the train stop. That will give me more time in either Mpls. or Seattle. I certainly need a little rest, even if only to catch up with my correspondence. And Mpls. has quite a schedule for me.

Tonight there is a CRDC party at Lydia's and tomorrow I go to Milwaukee for another meeting. But unlike Willkie, I don't intent to get defeated in Wisconsin and then throw in the sponge. I'll keep on speaking, visiting, urging, soliciting support until I get back to N.Y. Then please arrange to have me take a vacation in a deaf and dumb institution.

But I'm really very buoyant in spirits because of the extraordinary success that has so far attended the tour. Regards to all.

COPY
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[incomplete]

March 20, 1944

Dear Evelyn:

Although they were unable to have a public meeting for me in Buffalo, CRDC activities are in full swing. I surveyed the local situation with the active CRDC workers, and here's how matters stand.

They have already visited about 12 unions and have received contributions from three, totalling about $100. Representatives have spoken before eight and the woman workers have developed into good speakers. They will visit a number of other locals in the next few weeks, not only in Buffalo, but in the regions nearby such as Niagara Falls, etc.

During the last campaign Buffalo collected about $300 from local unions, and they hope to equal and surpass that this time, even though local conditions are not so favorable now for them.

The Bell Aircraft will be solicited after the elections which will be held there within a couple of weeks.

Although CP'ers are in control in the Buffal CIO Council, there is a possibility of getting a resolution through there but that will have to wait a whi

They have about 300 signatures on petitions, mostly obtained through house-to-house work in the Negro neighborhoods.

They make the suggestion from their contact experience that you combine all the prominent Negro supporters and endorsers into a single folder or sheet for use among Negroes.

They were very pleased by the Workmen's Circle endorsement and will visit the three branches here. They say that's "like money in the bank".

They are making a mailing to a list of local liberals of a letter bearing the signatures of six prominent civil liberties and labor figures.

Buffalo, as you know, originated the idea of the dollar-a-month Club. They have already got $11 of pledges and hope to have it up to $20 soon. They have no doubt of their ability to make their monthly quota.

Buffalo must also be credited with another innovation which you should pass on to the other local campaigns. They have drawn up a CRDC Campaign Progress Chart which they display prominently at every meeting, displaying the various categories of work, signatures, resolution, etc., which shows at a glance what the committee has done-or not done. I asked them to send you a copy of this chart so that you could use it.

They are enthusiastic about the prospect of getting movies for a local affair I suggest that you speed up this aspect as I believe that most committees could use this means of raising money, especially with the Muni picture and the movies of the defendants.

Will you send me a list of what the prisoners are working at in prison. Also copies of a couple of letters from Grace, et al. I forgot to take them.

I received the photostats of endorsements. Have heard nothing but praise for the new pamphlet and in general about the material sent out from the National Office.

That's the essentials.

Remember me to all the staff, including the Treasury Dept; Regional

Director Extraordinary

COPY
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March 22, 1944

Dear Evelyn:

Youngstown,too,was unable to have any public meeting for me and I have yet to be unveiled before the American public. But they are arranging a public meeting for me here at Akron on Friday at no less a place than the AFL Teamsters hall! That's bearding Dan Tobin in one of his lairs.

Until now Youngstown has been almost entirely inactive on CRDC work, a function of the general situtation there. However my visit has, I am sure, overcome that inertia and has imparted a much-needed impetus and direction. They had planned to have me visit the CIO Council officials but unfortunately they were all called to Washington for a steel conference with Murray so that the best I could do was leave a pamphlet and note.

However we mapped out a program of action as follows. First, get a resolutic of support passed by the Youngstown CIO Council where our friends have influence-and then do the same in several steel locals where we can get a sure response. I told them that we would be satisfied with nothing less that that as a minimum to compensate for lost time-and money.

A group of CRDC's will contact liberals and others for donations. The Workmen's Circle is a cinch. NAACP will be seen.

In addition, our friends will visit Newcastle,Pa., where the CIO officials are sympathetic to the case and have promised to get endorsements and contributions. There are several other unions in cities throughout the Mahoning Valley where our people will either visit or contact by mail.

They are enthusiastic about the idea of getting movies for a social. They also think the dollar-a-month cluban excellent means of soliciting regular contributions. Can you develop that idea?

I had lunch with two CRDC friends who work in the YWCA in Warren, Ohio. They have agreed to have a speaker on the case at one of their forums there on civil liberties.(No publicity on this as yet,please.) They took ten pamphlets and will try to collect money among their friends. In fact they have already distributed quite a bit of our literature to students at the University of Cincinnatti and other places. Will you please put on local CRDC mailing list: Genevieve Byrne, 346 N.Park Ave.,Warren,Ohio to receive all material sent to local committees.

Our material sent out by mail to the steel unions has not been acted favorably upon because of the hands-off policy of the Murray machine. The locals ask the organizer of the International who usually runs the meetings-and he turns a thumb down. But we're trying to get around that here and elsewhere.

Despite the lack of initiative here in contrast to Buffalo, I believe that from now on Youngstown will be heard from. They can meet their assigned quota-and have been collecting regularly from a number of supporters.

IMPORTANT: I received your letter including the reply from Bennett. I am surprised that you did not notice and comment upon the fact that he says: "a case was then pending against him." What case? This is the first we have know about any case other than the conviction of the 18 pending against Felix. This deserve the most immediate and careful inquiry. I suggest you speak to Baldwin and others about it. Also, if you consider it advisable, write Bennett a letter asking him about this newly discovered case. Baldwin might inquire from the Department of Justice, In any event, clear up this matter; decide what to do; and inform me what's what before I get to Mpls.

COPY

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March 22, 1944

I think it wise to have called off the panel discussion in view of Jim's attitude, and his arguments have substance. Wouldn't a movie evening be the next best thing? I'm glad to hear about the preparations in Toledo and Flint. This tour will put plenty of vitamins into the defense campaign.

Henrietta, Jules, Mildred and Stevie all send regards to all. When I get to Chicago, I'll send you a single check with all the money I've collected itemized.

The pamphlet is a big hit-and is proving indispensable.

G.

From George Cleveland, March 25.

"I sppke at the first public meeting on my tour last night in Akron at the Milk Drivers Hall,(given to us free and in defiance of Daniel J. Tobin, by the President of the Akron Teamsters Joint Council!) Do not use this fact in your publicity however. About 25 people present; collection about $26, which Akron CRDC will send directly to you.

As you will see from enclosed clippings, the Summitt County Labor News gave me publicity and the CRDC took an ad for the meeting in the Akron-Beacon Journal.

Since it was the first public affair of the CRDC in Akron, they considered it a step forward in their work. A number of people there signified willingness to attend a CRDC meeting in a week or so to extend their activity.

Equally important was the visit I made with an AFL organizer, Sam Pollock, to George Bass, President of Goodrich Local 5 of the United Rubber Workers and the leading progressive CIO leader of Akron. Bass was very friendly; agreed to have a resolution of support and a contribution passed in his key local, and to write a personal letter of endorsement. He also volunteered to push the resolution - if it passed through his local - through the xxxxxxx District Council of the URWA-CIO which meets in several weeks. If this goes through as planned, we will get endorsements from most of the leading rubber unions in this area.

Sam Pollock has agreed to serve as general director for Ohio of the CRDC campaign. He visits most of the principal cities and will try to interest unions in the case in places where we do not as yet have representatives, such as Canton, Dayton, Cincinnati, etc.

Akron wrote you for more of those Contact Books for his work. Will you also send me three or four at once, as they are extremely useful in approaching CIO leaders.

I suggest that you place Green's letter first, Abramson second, Workmen Circle third, CIO War Relief fourth, etc.

In most places not so much as been and I am afraid dannot be done on petitions - esppcially in the smaller towns, because they lack the necessary forces. Most work long hours and have other obligations. I've been concentrating, in view of the circumstances, in getting endorsements & personal contributions. Perhaps in other cities it will be different.

As Bass told us, it is much easier to get a hearing now from the more militant workers, because of what has happened to them in the past few months. I drove up to Cleveland this morning with Sam, a very pleasant spring day.

Jules, Henrietta, Sam & Sally want to be remembered to you all.

G.

From George, March 30.

The meeting held by the CRDC at Hotel Allerton in Cleveland last Sunday night was the first public affair they have held in that city. They were pleased with the attendance and results. From 25 to 30 were present, auto workers, steel workers, Negro workers. I spoke after John M. Holley, Pres. of the Future Outlook League. This is the leading Negro organization in ~~xxxxx~~ Cleveland numbering, according to Holley, 23,000 members. ~~xxx~~ It is a militant organization dedicated to the defense of the Negro economic and social rights - and has branches in a number of other ~~x~~ Ohio cities. Holley, who has himself been put in jail because of his fight for equal rights for his people, pledged the complete support of this organization to our Committee and its work. He promised to get a number of petitions circulated and signed within the next week among his members. He also said he would write a personal letter of support which he would give to the Cleveland CRDC. He also promised contributions and gave permission for us to visit any of his branches throughout Ohio. There were several new Negro worker contacts at the meeting and the speeches made a sgrong impression upon them, judging from their comments. I believe about $27 was collected at the meeting.

I discussed all phases of CRDC work with the Cleveland people and gave them suggestions for their activities. The Cleveland CIO Council is dominated by the Stalinists, so that there is little likelihood of favorable action there. But there are several locals that are approachable and they will get to work on those at once. Also the Workmen's Circle.

One of the CRDC members cleared up the mystery about the $100 Reading Ohio contribution. The UAW organizer there is sympathetic to the defense and is a friend of our friend who has long been active in the UAW. Although big things cannot be expected, I believe that after my visit you will begin to see Cleveland return to life.

One of our members gave me a letter of introduction to the Slovenian Society, a Socialist fraternal~~xxx~~ order like the Workmen's Circle. Their headquarters are in Chicago and I hope to visit their offices and seek an endorsement. This will open doors for us in Cleveland and elsewhere among the Yugoslavs.

Advertisement taken in Cleveland Call-Post, Mar. 25, 1944

Advertisement taken in The Cleveland Herald, March 24.

I haven't called Bennett yet about my visit to Sandstone. May do it from here tomorrow or from Chicago.

Why haven't you gone to see Grace? It's important. It's almost three months and no one has been to see her. Can Jules & Henrietta arrange to see her? Write to them about it.

How about the N.Y. work - endorsements from Dubinsky, Laundry Workers, etc.

From George April 3, 1944

Milwaukee provided the surprise of the tour thus far. Although it was Easter Sunday, about 30 people came to the meeting at the Pfister Hotel. The Committee expected only half that number. Among the audience was the president of the Milwaukee Free Thinkers Society, English section and the secretary of the German section of the Free Thinkers. Also the Secretary of the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom. About $15 was collected.

Because of the lack of forces and the general trade union situation, not too much can, I am afraid, be expected from this city. But the success of their meeting greatly heartened the CRDC members there and they will continue plugging away. They have been somewhat successful in getting members of the YPSL to work for the CRDC both in Milwaukee and at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

Here in Minneapolis I have already spoken twice this week with great success. Tuesday at the U. of Minn. students forum. Over 100 present at noon - the largest audience this year next to Norman Thomas'! Enclosed find clipping. (not enclosed)

Las night at the Hotel Andrews the WDL and CRDC held its big public meeting. Everyone was pleased by the results. There were well over 100 present. Joseph Warren Beach, Chairman. I was principal speaker. Myles Dunne made the speech for funds which totalled $144. Then Evelyn DeBoer thanked those present for their aid on behalf of the wives of the prisoners. Clipping from today's Mpls. Times enclosed (not enclosed. Publicity so far has been good.

At the meeting was Mrs. Wilcox, Chairman of the Labor Division of the Women's International League for Peace & Freesom. At their national convention in Washington next month she is going to present a report on the Mpls. case, and, if possible, get a resolution passed.

Before the meeting we held a supper get together with the Nat. Comm. members of the CRDC locally, at which I gave an account of our organizational work, my tour, and thanked them for their collaboration - and courage.

The Twin Cities CRDC expects to get about 1500 signatures by July 1st. They're collecting them regularly. I received a letter from Frisco stating their plans for meeting etc. Sounds very promising, but they still haven't got a hotel reservation. I have a full schedule of meetings yet ahead here in Mpls. Next Monday I'm to talk to the Farmers' Union at Jamestown, N.D.

Today I go with Henry Schultz and Fitchette to see Kelly Postal, Friday to Sandstone. I expec to see all five together at one time. Hurriedly but happily,

Chicago, Ill.

April 4, 1944

Dear Evelyn:

The tour continues to be successful beyond our anticipations when we first projected it.

FLINT. The CRDC public meeting in Flint was held in the YWCA building. About seventeen people were present and listened very eagerly to my talk. Among them were many of the leading committeemen in AC Spark Plug, Buick and other key UAW locals. There were also present a number of delegates to the Flint CIO Council. After the meeting and during the discussion period they demanded to know why a resolution of support had not been presented to the Council. They expressed indignation when they heard that the matter had been tabled when it was first brought up during the first phase of the case. Together with our CRDC members they then and there laid plans to bring the matter before the Council and they think it stands a good chance of being passed.

We also urged them to try to get similar resolutions passed in their locals. The educational director of Chevrolet local wanted me to come back and give a talk to the members of his union. But, as in a number of other places, I have had to regretfully decline because of my itinerary.

Although we do not have many active workers in Flint, several more were added to the committee as a result of the meeting. My visit, at least, helped to start matters moving and should produce some results from the unions.

DETROIT. The Detroit meeting must be considered as the high point of my tour, to date. About one hundred people were present at the dinner. The entire affair was excellently organized and advertised. I asked the Detroit CRDC to send you the clippings from the press so I shall not bother to itemize them. They will also send you an account of the affair so I will confine my remarks to additional observations.

The most striking feature of the meetings was the attendance of the progressive trade unionists of Detroit. Attending the dinner were the presidents of several important locals, stewards and committeemen, and rank and file militants from a number of the most progressive UAW locals. I know we could not have held such a meeting in Detroit a year and a half ago, which is an indication of how favorably our work there has progressed. The president of the Briggs local told me that evening that his executive board had approved an endorsement of the committee and that it would go before the membership's next meeting. The speeches by Reverend Horace White and Reverend Knox were powerful and quite impressive. I spoke for about an hour after them and then a collection was taken which amounted to around $150. Included in this was a fifty-dollar donation from Mat Smith of the MESA in lieu of his personal appearance, and his emmissary declared to the audience that the MESA was ready to contribute more if it was needed. We shall try to get an official letter from Mat Smith which we can use in going to other locals.

Although the chairman asked for questions, unlike other places there were none asked. I do not know whether I had exhausted the audience

or the subject but if the comments overheard were indicative the main facts and issues in the case had been adequately covered by the speakers.

This meeting marks a new stage in our work in this important CIO center and will bear considerable fruit in the coming months. The local CRDC Committee has augmented its forces and many new volunteers helped in the work of the meeting. They have mapped out an extensive program of activity, centering immediately around appearances before the unions. This work has been held up not only here but elsewhere because of the UAW elections which are held during February. With these elections over it will be much easier to approach the unions.

Detroit has also agreed to get 1,000 signatures by July 1 and have already made arrangements with the pastors of several churches to get signatures from their congregations.

I had a special interview with Rev. Knox in which I asked him to see R.J. Thomas and get a letter from him similar to Green's. He promised to have dinner with Thomas some day soon and try to persuade him to give us an endorsement. He believes that he might persuade Thomas to take a stand on this important civil liberties issue. He is a close personal friend of Thomas and officiated at his wedding. When Arthur saw Thomas last week, he was still considering the question. I tried to see Walter Reuther but he was out of town and I was more interested in getting Thomas if I could. But our CRDC representative will follow up on all these leads. Through Knox and other contacts we are endeavoring to get more letters from prominent union officials.

Detroit should soon send you $200 or so which was made at the meeting, and I am sure that you can count on them to more than fulfill any tasks assigned to them. Everyone there is extremely enthusiastic about the progress of their work.

The letters you sent me in Detroit finally reached me today in Chicago. The Negro bulletin is O.K.

I also think the material in the Civil Rights Defender is well presented and gives a very impressive and comprehensive picture of our activity. I was, however, critical of the cover in two respects: first the illustration does not show people in prison and that is the main thing we have to hammer on. Also the illustration has "18 convicted" whereas it should read "18 in prison". The other is "the first three months of the national campaign on the Mpls. labor case". This is misleading and incorrect. It should have read: "The first three months of the national campaign to liberate the 18 Mpls labor and socialist prisoners" or something of that kind.

Our workers throughout the country are certainly securing some excellent endorsements and, in general, there seems to be a spurt of activity everywhere.

I am emphasizing the need for securing petition signatures to CRDC committees en route and I hope to get time to write Jimmy a letter in answer to his.

Please insist on getting a hotel room in both San Francisco and L.A. I am sure that they can get one with a little pull or persistence. This is an absolute necessity and should not be violated if at all possible. You will have to get along with the old cheerful picture as I doubt whether I'll take a new one.

I suddenly recollect that I have forgotten two of the most important matters which may perhaps give you an indication of my present state of mind.

I. I called Bennet today by long distance telephone and received his verbal permission subject to confirmation to see Cannon, Goldman, Dunne Dobbs and Morrow, to discuss with them the progress of the pardon appeal of the 18. I have written today to Minneapolis, or rather St. Paul, to Henry Schulta asking him to see that the necessary arrangements are made for my transportation to Sandstone. I wrote Henry because I had some other matters to communicate to him. It will do not harm if you will repeat the news and the request to the CRDC representatives there.

II. I spoke with M. Meyer about the legal problems and the general work of our pardon campaign. I fact, I telephoned Bennett from his office. As you know, he has been doing a great deal of work for the CRDC in the past six months and we have been very remiss in our remuneration for his services. I requested that he submit a bill for the weeks of work he has done on the case, and I hope that you are in a position to send him at least a hundred dollars on account immediately and more thereafter as your income permits. It cannot be expected that any attorney who is called from his work for days at a time can be given merely his travelling expense.

From your letter I can see the necessity for emphasizing to the local committees the need for keeping their contributions flowing into N.Y. I believe that from the work which has already been initiated you will receive enought to keep you operating. And I may, somewhere along the line, run into a good enough angel - but I'm not depending on any bonanzas.

I will send you under separate cover some materials I have collected in several cities dealing with my tour.

I still insist upon the importance of having a visitor as soon as possible to Grace. Please try to work this out.

Hasn't Buffalo sent you in a copy of the CRDC campaign progress chart? Every local committee ought to have a facsimile of it for their own guidance. They can make it locally.

The well of my information has run dry at this point. Remember me to everyone in the office.

George.

WHAT THE LOCAL COMMITTEES ARE DOING

We are always glad to get detailed reports on activities in the Local Committees. We quote below from some recent letters:

NEWARK, N.J.

"At a union meeting visited Sunday - that of Local 871 UAW-CIO, our representative waited until the end of the meeting, at which time she was given a table close to the door where those who were leaving could sign a petition. In addition she had a can with a slit on top for contributions. About 130 signatures were received and $10.87 collected. The president had told us previously that the local was not in a position to contribute financially from the treasury. However, the case was very well received and the resolution was adopted unanimously.

"At a visit to the Socialist Party Forum, about 30 people were present. Most of them signed our petition and a number of them spoke to our representative after the meeting closed. Our representative also spoke at a steel workers' local #1833, and after completion of the talk we were permitted to circulate petitions while the meeting continued. We obtained 100 signatures this way which we will send to you as soon as the few remaining spaces on each sheet are filled. We visited four other unions and left petitions to be signed."

NEW YORK, N.Y.

A full report on the excellent activities of the New York Local Committee has recently been sent out. Special mention should again be made regarding the 5,000 pamphlets which New York has taken for both distribution and sale.

TWIN-CITIES, Minn.

"The Twin-Cities Branch of the WDL has reorganized its committees after its annual election and we are now really getting down to the business of collecting money. Will you please send us more collection lists; all of ours are out. We are keeping a careful record of them."

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal.

"The Socialist Party has passed a resolution. The S.F. Committee against Segregation & Discrimination, headed by Joseph James, has passed a resolution. A speaker is going to the NAACP this Sunday to ask for support. We have spoken before the Machinists Local 68, Retail Clerks Local 1100 AFL and Accion Democrata Espanola. We are waiting to hear from them. Enclosed is petition. Wherever we get the support of a local, we ask to have a poster & petition posted."

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ABOUT THE PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

In Sandstone, the men are working seven hours a day. Cannon, Skoglund and Dunne are orderlies (clean-up workers). Goldman works in the library. Geldman is in the kitchen. Palmquist, Hudson, Dobbs and Hansen work as painters. Morrow was alergic to paint, so he was transferred to the rock-pile. DeBoer, Hamel and Cooper are working outside the walls cutting brush. Coover is an electrician.

In Danbury, Shoenfeld is in the educational department. Russel is in the machine shop and Kuehn is an engineer.

In Alderson, Grace Carlson is in the Medical Office.

How the prisoners feel about their relief allowances is expressed in part of a letter from Albert Goldman:

"Ours is a small amount, but it makes a big difference in the life of a prisoner. We are fortunate in that we have an organization behind us constantly to agitate for our release and to help make our lives in prison a little more bearable. The progress the CRDC is making in enlisting support for us is great encouragement."

From a recent letter by Grace Carlson:
"I can't tell you how much I was moved by the story in your letter about the friend from Milnes Landing, Canada, who sent in a contribution to the CRDC for the "Finest of all battles, the fight for human liberty."

From Goldy Geldman, wife of one of the prisoners:
"Please thank our friends in the CRDC for all they are doing for the wives and children of the prisoners."

From Madeline Hudson, another wife:
"Carlos has asked me again to thank you for the relief allowance and to tell you how very much he appreciates it. Thank you also again for your help to me and my children."

The CRDC has sent the following books to the 18 prisoners. Those which are sent to Sandstone must first be approved by Washington:

History of Greece, Grote
Dialectics of Nature, Engels,
History of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky
Treasury of Science, Shapley,
My Native Land, Adamic
Clausewitz "On War"
The U.S. Since 1865, Louis Hacker
Contemporary Italy, Sforza
Citizen Tom Paine, H. Fast
Characteristics of Amer. Negro, Dr. O. Kleinberg

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COMMENTS FROM CONTRIBUTORS

Many contributors express their indignation at the unjust imprisonments, and send their moral as well as financial support. We quote from some below:

V.H., Hartford, Conn:

"Thanks for the recent pamphlet on the 18. Check enclosed. You might try sending the same pamphlet and appeal to the following 20 names..."

R.B.R., Reading, Pa.

"I will donate whenever I can to the political prisoners and fight any other infamy...Here is a list of names of other citizens who might donate to the cause. Also please send me a dozen more pamphlets."

H. R. New Sharon, Iowa.

"In December I sent you a small contribution to assist in carrying on the struggle for freedom for the Minneapolis victims and to help take care of their families. Since one donation won't do much on the continuing task of maintaining their dependants, I enclose a further small token with the wish that it were much larger."

Sergeant C.S., Miami, Fla.

"Enclosed please find money order. I am indeed sorry I cannot possibly place more money at the disposal of those who are guarding the basic freedoms. I am deeply, vitally interested in what your organization is doing. My best wishes to you always."

V. L., Bedford Hills, N.Y.

"I am interested in learning more about the CRDC and the work it is doing in relation to the 18 recently sentenced under the Smith "Gag" Act. I would like to bring your work to the attention of my friends who I am sure will be interested. Would you please send me some literature for distribution?"

L.G., Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

"As a lover of liberty I am much concerned about the 18 "Gag" Act victims. Am enclosing donation."

L. S., Granite, Oregon.

"Yours for a free world for all."

E.R.W., Philadelphia, Pa.

"I think the action of the Federal Government against the Teamsters is a crying shame, and I feel deeply enough about it to at least want to contribute a little. I would like to send much more but this is all I can afford."

C. T., Buffalo, N.Y.

"I wish the enclosed check might be a thousand times larger. I can only hope that thousands will send these small checks. I am grateful to you and your Committee for your vigorous action."

M.T.J., N.Y.

"I am enclosing check. The tickets (to the N.Y. Musicale) were sent to my wife, as I am now in the service. She sent them to me to show that the work of defending the liberty of our citizens still goes on. Keep up the good work!"

M.D., Austin, Tex.

"I want very much to help the 18 union and socialist leaders and am enclosing check. I wish I could do more."

N.G., New York

"Please accept this small sum as a token of my interest in the preservation of civil liberties."

A.R.A., Pasadena, Calif.

"I am enclosing check to aid in providing for the families of the union and socialist leaders now in prison."

W.M.C., New York

"I am heartily in accord with the opinions expressed in your letter and feel provileged to be included among those aiding this worthy fight."

J.H.J., Jersey City, N.J.

"Lots of good luck in your worthy cause."

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